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5. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 2, in which said data storage device is positioned in proximity to a patient examination area.
6. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 2, in which said data storage device is positioned remotely with respect to a patient examination area.
7. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 6, further comprising a communication device associated with said input device for establishing a communication link between said data storage device and said input device.
8. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 1, in which said medical risk database is a compilation of information derived from medical malpractice litigation.
9. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 1, in which said input device is a keyboard.
10. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 1, in which said input device is a cursor movement device.
11. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 1, in which said input device is a touch screen.
12. The medical care improving device of claim 1, further comprising an interactive display associated with said input device for displaying said patient data to an attending health care professional as it is entered.

13. The medical care improving device of claim 12, further comprising a diagnostic protocol template displayed by said interactive display and adapted to elicit said patient data.
- 5 14. The medical care improving device of claim 12, in which said interactive display also functions as said communication device.
- 15 15. The medical care improving device of claim 13, in which said communication device communicates on said template additional medical care that would reduce the risk of a missed medical care opportunity.
- 15 16. The medical care improving device of claim 13, in which said template includes at least one field presented on said visual display for entering certain patient data that increases the risk of a missed medical care opportunity.
- 20 17. The medical care improving device of claim 16, in which said communication device displays on said visual display, in proximity to said field, information about additional medical care that would reduce the risk of a missed medical care opportunity.
- 25 18. The medical care improving device of claim 1, in which said communication device responds to the entry of patient data, shortly after the entry of said data, by providing information about additional medical care that would reduce the risk of a missed medical care opportunity.
19. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 10 minutes after the entry of said data.

20. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 2 minutes after the entry of said data.
- 5 21. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 1 minute after the entry of said data.
22. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said
10 communication device responds within 30 seconds after the entry of said data.
23. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said
15 communication device responds within 20 seconds after the entry of said data.
24. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said
20 communication device responds within 10 seconds after the entry of said data.
25. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 5 seconds after the entry of said data.
- 25 26. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 4 seconds after the entry of said data.

27. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 2 seconds after the entry of said data.
- 5 28. The medical care improving device of claim 18, in which said communication device responds within 1 second after the entry of said data.
29. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 1, in which said
10 communication device is a video display operatively connected to said data processor to display an indication of appropriate additional medical care.
30. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 1, in which said communication device is an alarm providing a signal perceptible to a
15 health care professional.
31. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 30, in which said alarm is selectively perceptible to a health care professional and not to the patient.
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32. The medical care improving apparatus of claim 30, in which said alarm is encoded, to avoid alarming a patient who happens to encounter it.
33. An interactive method for avoiding medical risk during a medical
25 diagnostic procedure carried out by a health care professional, comprising:
 - A. identifying medical data presented by the patient;
 - B. recording said medical data in a data storage device, forming data records;

C. maintaining on a data storage medium a medical risk database that associates:

i. certain medical data that increases the risk of a missed medical care opportunity, and

5 iii. additional medical care that would reduce the risk of a missed medical care opportunity, despite the presentation of said certain medical data;

10 D. comparing the medical data presented by the patient with said medical risk database to identify whether medical data presented by the patient is associated with a risk of a missed medical care opportunity;

15 E. if medical information presented by the patient is associated with a risk of a missed medical care opportunity, communicating to said health care professional information about additional medical care that would reduce the risk of a missed medical care opportunity.

34. An interactive diagnostic template for medical diagnosis, said template comprising:

20 A. a multiplicity of indicia indicating potential symptoms contributing to a diagnosis;

B. said symptoms including:

25 i. a first subset of prompted symptoms that should routinely be checked to properly document the diagnosis; and

ii. a second subset of optional symptoms that can be checked at the option of an attending health care professional; and

C. symbols associated with said prompted symptoms that have a first condition when the evaluation of a prompted symptom has not yet been documented and a second, visibly distinct condition when evaluation of the prompted symptom has been documented.

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35. The interactive diagnostic template of claim 34, wherein the first condition of said symbols is a representation of a lit red light and the second condition of said symbols is a representation of a lit green light.

10 36. The interactive diagnostic template of claim 34, further comprising:

A. indicia indicating at least one conditionally prompted symptom that is prompted when at least a first other associated prompted symptom is present but not prompted if the other associated prompted symptom is absent; and

15 B. a symbol associated with said conditionally prompted symptom that:

i. is displayed only if the associated prompted symptom is documented; and

20 iii. when displayed, has a first condition when the conditionally prompted symptom has not yet been investigated and a second, visibly distinct condition when evaluation of the conditionally prompted symptom has been documented.

25 37. The interactive diagnostic template of claim 36, wherein the first condition of said symbol associated with said conditionally prompted symptom is a representation of a lit red light and the second condition of said symbol is a representation of a lit green light.

38. An interactive diagnostic template for medical triage of a patient, comprising:
- A. a display presenting a list of acute emergencies that require immediate notification to a treating medical professional;
 - 5 B. at least one symbol associated with at the acute emergency list that has a first condition prompting a triaging medical professional to evaluate whether any of the acute emergencies exists and a second, visibly distinct condition when the triaging medical professional has ruled out all of the acute emergencies; and
 - 10 C. a warning signal to the triaging medical professional, responsive to the documentation of an acute emergency, to notify a treating medical professional immediately.
39. The triage template of claim 38, comprising a first display of said warning for use by a medical professional who is conducting triage and a
- 15 second display of said warning signal positioned remotely from said first display for use by another medical professional who should know if a patient in triage is suffering from an acute emergency condition.
- 20 40. The triage template of claim 38, wherein the first condition of said symbol is a representation of a lit red light and the second condition of said symbol is a representation of a lit green light.
41. An interactive diagnostic template for medical diagnosis, said
- 25 template comprising:
- A. a multiplicity of indicia indicating potential symptoms contributing to a diagnosis; and

- 5 B. at least one key information icon associated with at least one potential symptom, indicating that additional information pertinent to the potential symptom is available for review upon request; and
C. an input device for requesting a display of the additional information associated with said icon.

10 42. The template of claim 41, wherein said additional information comprises at least one anatomical drawing of the site of the symptom associated with said icon.

43. The template of claim 41, wherein said additional information comprises at least one diagnostic score relating to the symptom associated with said icon.

15 44. The template of claim 41, wherein said additional information comprises an updates on the standard of care relating to the symptom associated with said icon.

20 45. The template of claim 41, wherein said additional information comprises information on how to test for the symptom associated with said icon.